

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BERLIN 00496 191736Z

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ACTION EUR-25

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, PINT, GW, WB, US

SUBJECT: CDU/CSU MEETINGS IN BERLIN

1. CDU/CSU MINI-PARTY CONGRESS IN BERLIN MARCH 18-19
WAS ATTENDED BY APPROXIMATELY 120 MEMBERS OF CDU/CSU
BUNDESTAG FRAKTION, PARTY EXECUTIVE BOARD, PARTY
PRESIDIUM AND NATIONAL COMMITTEE (BUNDES AUSSCHUSS).
KOHL, CARSTENS, KIESINGER, STRAUSS, BIEDENKOPF, AND
OTHER PROMINENT CDU/CSU LEADERS FANNED OUT THROUGHOUT
CITY TO ADDRESS PARTY FAITHFUL EVENING MARCH 18.

2. IN ADDITION TO ALL-OUT ATTACK ON BRANDT AND
SPD--STRAUSS CALLED BRANDT "THE MOST OVERRATED
POLITICIAN IN FRG SINCE WORLD WAR II"--ALL PARTY
LEADERS STRESSED THAT GOOD RELATIONS WITH U.S.
WERE FOUNDATION OF GERMAN FOREIGN POLICY AND
ATTACKED BRANDT GOVERNMENT FOR MISHANDLING GERMAN-US
RELATIONS. CARSTENS CALLED FOR GOOD RELATIONS WITH
FRANCE AS WELL, AND STRAUSS (WHO DAY BEFORE DEMANDED
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PAGE 02 BERLIN 00496 191736Z

AN ATLANTIC SUMMIT MEETING AND WARNED OF POSSIBLE

US-SOVIET ARRANGEMENT OVER HEADS OF EUROPEANS) SAID THERE WAS NO SUBSTITUTE FOR U.S. SECURITY GUARANTEE.

3. DISCUSSING BERLIN MATTERS WITH PRESS, KOHL APPEALED TO FOUR POWERS TO DEMAND THAT GDR ADHERE STRICTLY TO THE QA, AND CARSTENS SAID ATLANTIC ALLIANCE AND CLOSE COOPERATION WITH U.S. WERE INDISPENSABLE PREREQUISITES FOR FRG SECURITY, ESPECIALLY FOR BERLIN.

4. ACCORDING TO PRESS, IZVESTIYA PROTESTED CDU/CSU MEETINGS AS PROVOCATION CONTRARY TO SPIRIT OF QA. CARSTENS REJECTED SOVIET PROTEST IN SPEECH MARCH 18 (AS DID CDU PRESS SPOKESMAN NEXT DAY) AND SAID RIGHT TO HOLD MEETINGS DERIVED FROM QA. HE DESCRIBED TIES BETWEEN BERLIN AND FEDERAL REPUBLIC AS VITAL NECESSITY FOR BOTH PARTIES. KOHN WENT FURTHER AND ANNOUNCED THAT CDU/CSU PLANNED TO HOLD LARGER PARTY MEETING (BUT APPARENTLY NOT A NATIONAL PARTY CONGRESS) IN BERLIN IN SPRING 1976 TO DISCUSS PARTY'S PLATFORM.

5. NOT SURPRISINGLY, MOOD OF CDU LEADERSHIP DURING BERLIN VISIT WAS OPTIMISTIC IN AFTERGLOW OF RHEINLAND PALATINATE ELECTION RESULTS. ONE LOCAL PARTY OFFICIAL TOLD MISSION OFFICER THAT ALTHOUGH THEY WERE PREACHING TO CONVERTED, VISIT NOT ONLY DEMONSTRATED CDU CONCERN FOR BERLIN BUT HOPEFULLY WOULD STIMULATE BERLIN CDU MEMBERSHIP TO MAKE GREATER EFFORTS IN FORTHCOMING BERLIN ELECTION CAMPAIGN. REPORTEDLY, CDU/CSU LEADERS DID NOT DISCUSS PARTY'S CANDIDATE FOR FEDERAL PRESIDENT OR WHETHER PARTY WOULD APPEAL GDR ACCREDITATION PROCEDURE TO FEDERAL CONSTITUTIONAL COURT. BOTH KOHL AND CARSTENS DENIED SPECULATION ABOUT POSSIBLE GRAND COALITION IN LIGHT OF RECENT SPD REVERSES.BORG

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